

friendship among fellow members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority—the Nation's largest predominately African-American women's organization. And in 1965, she became the first African American to graduate from the University of Alabama, earning a degree in Business Management.

Ms. Malone was not just a symbol of courage; she also set an example of forgiveness. In 1996 Governor Wallace, who 3 decades earlier stood in the entryway to the university's auditorium, flanked by State troopers, to prevent Ms. Malone from enrolling, awarded her with the first Lurleen B. Wallace Award for Courage. Later recalling their conversation, Ms. Malone said that she simply spoke with Governor Wallace about forgiveness.

Throughout her life, Ms. Malone was dedicated to the preservation and enforcement of our civil rights laws. After graduation, she worked for the U.S. Department of Justice in the Civil Rights Division. In 1977, she took over as Executive Director for the Voter Education Project following the resignation of another civil rights legend, Congressman JOHN LEWIS. Eventually, Ms. Malone rose to become a Director of Civil Rights and Urban Affairs for the Environmental Protection Agency in Atlanta, GA, before retiring there in 1996.

In 2000, she gave the commencement address at the University of Alabama and advised the new graduates: "If there is any lesson for the graduates to take from my experience, it is that you must always be ready to seize the moment." Ms. Malone passed away on October 15, 2005, but her legacy continues. It lives on through her children, grandchildren, and siblings. It also lives on through the important work of her brother-in-law, Attorney General Eric Holder. He has done so much in the past 5 years to return the Civil Rights Division to its core mission. I have no doubt that his sense of purpose is informed by the proud history of the Malone family including his sister-in-law, Vivian, and his wife, Dr. Sharon Malone.

As we honor our Nation's civil rights heroes in preparation for next month's momentous anniversary of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech and the historic March on Washington, let us honor another courageous icon who told those University of Alabama graduates in 2000, "You may not live in a time of great social change as I did, but you will just as certainly face moral choices." I hope Ms. Malone's courage, determination, and forgiveness will serve as a guiding light for generations to come, and to make the right moral choices in our own lives.

CRIME GUN TRACING ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a new bill I have introduced called the Crime Gun Tracing Act. This bill will create a strong incentive for police departments and

sheriff's offices across the nation to trace every crime gun they recover. I am pleased that my colleagues Senators FEINSTEIN, WHITEHOUSE, BLUMENTHAL, LEVIN, BOXER, JACK REED and MURPHY have joined me as cosponsors of this legislation. I thank them for their support.

The issue of gun regulation is complicated, and people may not always agree on all aspects of it. But one thing we can all agree on is the need to reduce criminal gun violence. Far too many violent shootings are taking place across America. We need to catch the criminals who commit violent gun crimes, and we need to identify and stop the people who are putting guns in criminals' hands.

Crime gun tracing is a powerful tool that helps law enforcement solve gun crimes and identify gun traffickers. Law enforcement agencies should be tracing 100 percent of guns they recover in criminal investigations, and the legislation I am introducing will help get us closer to that goal.

Here is how crime gun tracing works. When a gun is recovered in a criminal investigation, a police department or sheriff's office can send the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives—ATF—information about the gun's make, model and serial number. ATF can then trace the gun from its manufacturer to its first retail purchaser. This information can help generate leads in identifying the person who used the gun to commit a crime. Also, when all crime guns in an area are traced, it can help law enforcement identify broader crime gun trends and trafficking patterns.

ATF has described crime gun tracing as a "cornerstone" of its efforts to combat gun crime and illegal gun trafficking. And ATF has made it free and easy for local police departments and sheriff's offices to trace guns. ATF has created an online tracing program, called E-Trace, that it makes available for free to any law enforcement agency that signs up for it. E-Trace allows gun trace requests to be sent to ATF quickly over the internet. And it provides a searchable computer database that police departments and sheriffs can use to analyze all gun traces and gun crimes in their jurisdiction.

Let us be clear: This is only a database for crime guns. This is not a registry of law-abiding gun owners. ATF only traces guns that are part of criminal investigations by law enforcement.

E-Trace is a great law enforcement tool. I have been working for years to get every police department and sheriff's office in Illinois to sign up for E-Trace and to use it for every crime gun they recover.

We are about halfway there in Illinois—around 400 out of 800 law enforcement agencies in my state are using E-Trace, and I am reaching out to the rest to urge them to sign up. But we can do better, both in Illinois and nationally.

I am introducing my bill, the Crime Gun Tracing Act, to help move us to-

ward 100 percent tracing of crime guns nationwide. There are about 18,000 law enforcement agencies in America, and right now about 4,700 have signed up to use E-Trace. All of these agencies should sign up to use E-Trace and should use it every time they recover a crime gun.

My bill will require law enforcement agencies that apply for Federal COPS grants to report how many crime guns they recovered in the last year and how many they submitted for tracing. The bill will then give a preference in COPS grant awards to agencies that traced all the crime guns they recovered.

To be clear, police chiefs and sheriffs should not just wait for this legislation to pass before they start tracing. They should start tracing today, and I hope many will. But for those local agencies that need a push to start tracing their crime guns, my bill will give them a significant incentive.

Gun violence is a complicated problem, and there is no one solution that will stop all the tragic shootings in our nation. But comprehensive crime gun tracing will make a big difference when it comes to solving gun crimes and identifying gun traffickers. Crime gun tracing is free, it is easy, and law enforcement leaders will tell you that it is a powerful tool that helps them fight crime.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation. And I also urge my colleagues to call on law enforcement in their States to start tracing all their crime guns, as I have done in Illinois. Many police departments and sheriff's offices simply do not know about this free law enforcement resource called E-Trace, and once they learn how easy it is to sign up and use E-Trace, they are thrilled with it.

We can make important progress on the issue of crime gun tracing right now if we alert all our State and local agencies about this powerful investigative tool. Every additional crime gun that gets traced makes it harder for illegal gun traffickers to hide. If we can identify and root out these trafficking networks, it will help reduce gun violence in our communities. That is a goal we should pursue, and I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

SMARTER SOLUTIONS FOR STUDENTS ACT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the choice before the Senate yesterday was very difficult. If we had failed to pass the student loan bill, students and their families would be stuck with interest rates for student loans that are double what they were just last year. American students and parents who worry every single day about whether they can afford college cannot be burdened with such an enormous rate hike.

The cost of tuition at public 4-year colleges is up more than 15 percent since 2009. Student loan debt has reached historic proportions. Yet we allowed the rate on new federally subsidized student loans to double, to 6.8